New Insurance Schemes for Farmers

3888. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a bid to provide greater insurance coverage to farmers in the event of failure of their crops, Government have decided to come out with new scheme in placeof existing ones;

(b) whether this new scheme will be based on recommendations made recently by the joint group formed by the Centre to review NAIS and suggested measures to improve insurance coverage of farmers;

(c) if so, from which date the scheme is likely to come into force; and

(d) whether this policy has been helpful to the farmers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (d) To make the existing Crop Insurance Scheme more attractive to the farmers so as to provide greater coverage, a Joint Group to study the improvements required in the existing Crop Insurance Schemes was set up by the Government.

The Group has made in-depth study of the related issues and submitted its report on 20.12.2004. To improve the Crop Insurance Scheme, the Group has made many important recommendations relating to smaller unit area of insurance; basis of calculation of Threshold Yield, provision of higher indemnity level; coverage of pre-sowing/planting risks and post harvest losses, personal accident insurance cover and package insurance policy etc.

The Government, at present, is in the process of consulting various stakeholders to modify the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (NAIS) based on the recommendations of the Joint Group.

Production of Apples

3889. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under, Government's consideration to substantially increase the production of apples in the country;

(b) if so, whether the areas identified for the purpose included the new areas proposed to be brought under apple cultivation and if so, the source and the quantum of funds required for the purpose; and

(c) the extent to which apple production is expected to increase, year-wise during the next three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA) : (a) The Government is implementing a Centrally Sponsord Scheme on Technology Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture in the North Eastern States, Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Uttaranchal. Under this Scheme, the covered State Governments can take up programmes for increasing the production of apples.

(b) Under the scheme, new areas could be brought under apple cultivation. An amount of Rs. 385.00 lakh was provided to the State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal and Jammu & Kashmir during 2003-04 and 2004-05.

(c) No estimates have been made on the year wise increase in production of apples in the next three years.

Investment in Agriculture Sector

3890. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the provisions made for raising the level of investment in the agriculture sector; and

(b) the details of allocation made for new schemes in rural areas as revenue expenditure and that as durable investment component?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) With a view to raising the level of investment in agriculture sector, including the allied sectors of forestry and logging and fishing, the plan outlay of the Ministry of agriculture has been raised by 43% from Rs. 4,192 crore in 2004-05 (Budget Estimates) to Rs. 5,998 crore in 2005-06 (Budget Estimates).

(b) A number of new schemes aimed at improving productive capacity in agriculture, which largely benefits rural areas by raising employment